

THE
**FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS**

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: GLCA

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area preserves 1.25 million acres of the stunning red rock landscape of the Colorado Plateau. The park includes Lake Powell, one of the most important recreational destinations in the Desert Southwest. Renowned for its red rock canyons, slickrock mesas, and a rich tapestry of human and geologic history, Glen Canyon offers unparalleled opportunities for boating, hiking, fishing, and camping. The park also includes the Escalante Canyons, a vast area known for its outstanding canyon scenery; the Orange Cliffs, which adjoins the western half of Canyonlands National Park; the San Juan River; Lees Ferry; and the Colorado River.

Glen Canyon looks forward to celebrating the Centennial of the National Park Service in 2016. The myriad of appropriate recreational activities available at Glen Canyon - houseboating, wakeboarding, kayaking, hiking, mountain biking, and fishing, to name a few - provides enormous promise in reconnecting Americans of all ages with active outdoor recreation. Through the Centennial Challenge, we will seek to enhance opportunities for outdoor recreation, and specifically construct a trail in partnership with the city of Page, Arizona, along the rim of Glen Canyon.

More than anywhere, this desert reservoir must demonstrate environmental leadership. In support of this Centennial Challenge goal, Glen Canyon and Grand Canyon are collaborating with river rafting concessioners at both parks to undertake a groundbreaking research and development project designed to develop and implement an environmentally sound alternative motorboat propulsion system suitable for commercial river operations on the Colorado River in Glen Canyon and Grand Canyon.

The landscape of the Colorado Plateau is one of the most unique in the world. Yet it is also one of the most fragile. Impacts from current and historic grazing and mining activities are visible throughout the park. Glen Canyon will actively seek to restore natural landscapes, removing traces of the influence of modern society and eliminating non-native species.

In short, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area will strive to be the premier recreation area in the National Park System in anticipation of the National Park Service's centennial anniversary.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Kitty Roberts/Kevin Schneider

Site: GLCA

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area will improve the river area at Lees Ferry to make it more hospitable and inviting to visitors, allowing them opportunities to relax and contemplate this spectacular setting. Although numerous historic buildings and historic features are distributed throughout the Lees Ferry and adjacent Lonely Dell Ranch areas, they have been minimally interpreted. Immediately between the historic buildings and the river is a large graveled parking lot, remnant of an earlier trailer park. This would make an ideal location for visitors simply traveling through to stop and and enjoy the beautiful riparian setting and colorful high cliffs along the Colorado River.

Specific tasks would include xeric landscaping of the gravel parking lot, trimming existing vegetation to develop up to 7 separate shaded picnic areas along the river bank, repairing and interpreting the old alignment of the Arizona Road as a hiking trail, mapping and interpreting numerous historic features relating to gold mining activities, and developing trails and interpretive kiosks.

☒ The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: GLCA

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

☒ Improve the natural resources in parks, as measured by the vital signs developed under the Natural Resource Challenge.

Impacts from current and historic grazing and mining activities are visible throughout Glen Canyon. Today, the park has the largest grazing operation of any national park unit, with 60% of Glen Canyon (741,000 acres) open to grazing. Glen Canyon will actively seek to restore natural landscapes, to remove traces of the influence of modern society, and eliminate non-native species. In some areas, grazing has impacted Glen Canyon NRA's natural, cultural, and recreational resources. The area has also experienced severe drought conditions for the past six years, significantly reducing available forage for cattle. Given current and projected range conditions, the National Park Service is considering options to reduce or eliminate these impacts in order to concentrate our focus on recreational opportunities and protection of cultural and natural resources which are the basic purposes for the establishment of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

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STEWARDSHIP

☒ **Assure that no compelling chapter in the American heritage experience remains untold and that strategically important landscapes are acquired, as authorized by Congress.**

☒ **Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)**

Glen Canyon NRA will develop information concerning past human occupation of the park and share it with boaters to enhance their understanding of how humans survived in this region. Specific tasks would include completion of an ethnographic resource inventory, development of personal and non-personal interpretive materials tying ethnographic and archeological information to specific geographic locales, and communicating this information to visitors. The ethnographic study would involve conducting interviews with elders of several associated tribes to discover the nature of their ties to various features within the park, and how they used and traveled across park lands. In addition, archeological data would be used to supplement this information and describe the continuum between prehistoric, protohistoric, and modern habitation patterns.

An educational volume would be prepared as a "boater's guide" to visitors as they made their way uplake, with points of interest highlighted and described in the text. Audio programs, such as podcasts, could also be developed to educate visitors.

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Site: GLCA

ENVIRONMENT

☒ **Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.**

☒ **Establish programs to showcase exemplary environmental practices and increase visitor awareness of how the practices apply to their daily lives, as measured by surveys.**

A resource of the national parks that has received increasing attention over the last few years is the night sky. The NPS Night Sky Team recently conducted an assessment of the night sky within certain areas of Glen Canyon NRA. At the end of the initial assessment period, one team member characterized Glen Canyon as having "some of the most pristine night skies I've ever seen." The park has been encouraged to work toward making certain areas of the park Night Sky Preserves.

One of the services offered by this team is an inventory of park lighting and recommendations for more "night friendly" lighting. The park would work with the Night Sky Team and Lake Powell Resorts & Marinas to bring night friendly lighting to the Bullfrog, Halls Crossing, and Dangling Rope Marinas. This would also provide an excellent opportunity to partner with our gateway communities, such as Page, Arizona, and Ticaboo, Utah, to improve lighting that is immediately adjacent to park boundaries.

As more and more people take up residence in the cities and suburbs, places like Glen Canyon would be preserving a truly spectacular view that is unavailable in the hometowns of most Americans.

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☒ **Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.**

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and Grand Canyon National Park are collaborating with 17 different river rafting concession businesses at both parks to undertake a groundbreaking project to develop and implement an environmentally friendly alternative motorboat propulsion system suitable for commercial river operations on the Colorado River in the parks. The goal for this effort is the development of motorboat engines that are durable, safe, and reliable, while utilizing alternative energy sources that are nearly emission-free and silent.

Each concessioner, in its contract with the National Park Service, pledged a portion of its profits to help fund this effort. The National Park Service will provide leadership, coordination, and funding so that by 2016 these environmentally friendly boat motors can be used not only in Glen Canyon and Grand Canyon, but in other parks and throughout the entire country.

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ENVIRONMENT

☒ Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.

☒ Serve as a model for energy efficiency, under Executive Order 13423, by ensuring Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

More than anywhere, this desert reservoir must demonstrate environmental leadership. Glen Canyon will fully embrace the LEED standards and will strive to insure that all new buildings constructed in the park meet LEED standards. In addition, electricity and water usage will be carefully audited to reduce our consumption of these resources.

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ENVIRONMENT

☒ Engage partners, communities, and visitors in shared environmental stewardship.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area is collaborating with local stakeholders to help build a sustainable recycling program for this region. Despite receiving some two million visitors annual, recycling in this area is extremely limited due to the distances involved in transporting recyclables to urban areas. Nonetheless, recycling in this area is feasible if businesses and individuals are willing. The park will collaborate with the city of Page, Arizona, its concessioners ARAMARK and Antelope Point Holdings, and other local stakeholders to build a community-based recycling program that is convenient and economically sound. In addition, the park will work with its concessioners to further reduce the waste of their operations through composting.

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Site: GLCA

RECREATION

☒ Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.

☒ Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

Although Glen Canyon is one of the largest parks in the continental United States, there are very few designated hiking trails. In partnership with the city of Page, Arizona, the park intends to construct a trail on both park and city land that will connect with an existing trail system in Page. This trail would follow the rim of Glen Canyon, providing spectacular vistas into this 1,200 foot canyon and of the surrounding red rock landscape. This trail would be constructed in such a way to allow it to be open to both hiking and mountain biking. This project will result in a world-class recreational resource for both park visitors. In addition, the Glen Canyon Rim Trail would also be a major asset to local residents of Page, enhancing the quality of life for the area's population. Many local residents seek additional jogging, hiking, and biking paths that are within their community. Trailheads for this proposed trail would be located immediately within the city of Page.

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RECREATION

☒ Establish "volun-tourism" excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.

☒ Increase annual volunteer hours by 100 percent, from 5.2 million hours to 10.4 million hours.

Graffiti is an ongoing problem throughout Glen Canyon. Although not exactly like urban graffiti, some visitors have thoughtlessly scratched their names on the soft sandstone walls around Lake Powell. Since 2004, Glen Canyon has had an extremely successful volunteer program known as True GRIT to remove this unsightly graffiti. Using a houseboat that was donated to the park and a full-time volunteer, volunteer crews sign up for five-day houseboat trips to all parts of Lake Powell to remove graffiti. For many volunteers, these trips are a working vacation and an opportunity to give something back to this special place.

Start-up and initial costs were borne by a three-year grant from the National Park Foundation. The program has grown in popularity with each year, logging over 3,000 volunteer hours and removing more than 11,000 square feet of graffiti.

Today, the True GRIT program is supported by Antelope Point Holdings, a park concessioner. Skipperliner, a houseboat manufacturer, provides spare parts for the boat. Glen Canyon NRA will commit itself to find additional support for this program to ensure it is sustainable through 2016 and beyond. Additional partners will be sought.

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RECREATION

☒ Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

☒ Increase the number of visitors that attend ranger-facilitated programs such as campfire talks, hikes, and school programs.

Glen Canyon will use operating increases through the Centennial Challenge to expand the seasons of its interpretive park ranger staff, allowing the park to provide additional interpretive programs. The park will expand interpretive programming at Hite, focusing on land-based activities. We will also expand our interpretive ranger presence on tour boats and river trips operated by concessioners. Centennial Challenge operating increases will also allow the park to provide additional programs to organized tour groups, such as Elderhostel.

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Site: GLCA

EDUCATION

☒ Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.

☒ Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.

Many of Glen Canyon's visitors include families on boating vacations. To connect these visitors, who often do not stop in visitor centers for information, the park is working towards producing educational podcasts, which would be available on the park's website. These podcasts could focus on specific destinations or resources in the park, allowing visitors to view them at their leisure during their trip.

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Site: GLCA

EDUCATION

☒ Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

☒ Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

Glen Canyon will endeavor to create a floating visitor contact station, staffed with NPS interpreters. The floating visitor contact station would spend each summer roving Lake Powell, providing a much needed interface with park visitors, including visitors to Rainbow Bridge National Monument.

Park rangers working from the floating contact station could lead interpretive hikes, guided kayaking trips, or boat tours for park visitors from almost any location on Lake Powell. The boat would have a bathroom, cooking area, and sleeping area, so it could be out 4-5 days at a time. In the off-season, it could be used as a floating classroom where school groups from underserved local and regional schools could experience place-based science education. The contact station would create a higher profile for the NPS at Glen Canyon, as well as provide enhanced services for lakeshore campers, serving tens of thousands of visitors annually.

The NPS will work to form partnerships to create an endowment to fund the operation of the floating contact station.

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Site: GLCA

PROFESSIONALISM

☒ Promote a safety and health culture for all employees and visitors.

☒ Reduce the number of employee lost-time incidents and serious visitor injuries by 20 percent.

In support of this goal, Glen Canyon is hiring a permanent, full-time safety and occupational health manager. The nature of visitor recreational activities, including motorized boating and swimming, and employee job duties present significant safety hazards at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. The park is committed to reducing visitor and employee accidents. This position is integral to accomplishing that goal.

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PROFESSIONALISM

☒ Make national parks the first choice in philanthropic giving among those concerned about environmental, cultural, and recreational values.

☒ Improve communications and marketing capacity to increase public understanding of our mission, opportunities, and benefits.

Visitors to Glen Canyon care deeply about Lake Powell. The park has a strong base of visitors that return year after year with their families to vacation on the lake. Many of these visitors would likely be willing to support the park philanthropically, however there currently is no philanthropic foundation dedicated to raising money to support Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. By 2016, we hope to see the creation of a self sustaining non-profit foundation.

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